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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 JAKARTA 003020

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DEPARTMENT FOR P, EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS, IO, IO/UNP

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SUBJECT: INDONESIA'S UNSC PRESIDENCY: PROCESS ABOVE ALL

REF: JAKARTA 2968

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Classified By: Ambassador Cameron R. Hume, reasons 1.4 (b,d).

[¶1.](#) (C) SUMMARY: Indonesia is looking forward to assuming the UNSC presidency--a largely procedural position--in November. The GOI agenda is likely to be shaped by Jakarta's preference for consensus-driven multilateral approaches to foreign policy issues. On some key issues--including Iran and Burma--the Indonesians will likely be inclined to avoid controversial stands and to support approaches that emphasize diplomatic process over concrete results. Indonesia also wants to promote multilateral peacemaking in the Middle East, but is short on specifics. Overall, the GOI will be satisfied if it looks like a fair broker, and if its November tenure goes by without tension and recriminations. END SUMMARY.

INDONESIA'S NOVEMBER

[¶2.](#) (SBU) Indonesia is realistic about the largely procedural nature of the UNSC presidency. In an October 25 interview in the Jakarta Post, PermRep Marty Natalegawa stressed the need to manage expectations regarding what Indonesia could achieve as UNSC president. He said Indonesia would seek to build consensus among all UNSC members and was aware that as president it "had to speak on behalf of all." In managing tensions among the P-5, Natalegawa said, Indonesia would rely on its historical role as "a builder of bridges" between countries.

[¶3.](#) (SBU) Natalegawa, one of the Indonesian diplomatic corps' fast-rising stars--he became Ambassador to the UK at age 42--will play a key role shaping Indonesia's actions as UNSC president. He headed the Department of Foreign Affairs (DEPLU) office for UN policy-making from 2000-2001 and has served two previous assignments at the Indonesian mission in New York.

STRESSING MULTILATERAL APPROACHES

[¶4.](#) (C) Contacts have told us that Indonesia sees the presidency as an opportunity to raise its foreign policy

profile, chiefly by promoting multilateral approaches to international problems. Indonesia's thematic debate, scheduled for November 6, will focus on the role of regional and sub-regional organizations. The Indonesians see this as an opportunity to highlight ASEAN's efforts to achieve peace and stability in Southeast Asia. They also hope to promote a similar multilateral, consensus-based approach to other conflict areas, notably the Middle East.

KEY ISSUES

15. (C) Middle East -- Despite Natalegawa's sense of realism, the Indonesian approach on some issues may tend, for domestic policy reasons, to be longer on rhetoric than on specifics. Chief among these issues is the Middle East. President Yudhoyono has taken a personal interest in the region and tends to approach it with a touch of grandeur. During Palestinian President Abbas' October 21-23 visit to Jakarta (ref a), presidential advisor Dino Djalal ambitiously suggested that Indonesia would use its UNSC Presidency to help facilitate the Israeli-Palestinian peace process and reconcile Fatah and Hamas. Indonesia has made such pledges before, but has yet to deliver any tangible successes.

16. (C) While President Yudhoyono envisions a role for Indonesia in arranging Middle East peace and sincerely wants Indonesia to play such a role, DEPLU has generally taken a more realistic, if not skeptical, tack on the Middle East. DEPLU's Directorate of Middle Eastern Affairs is relatively weak within the Department's hierarchy and is frequently left out of the decision-making process on major issues. FM Wirajuda relies instead on a small number of key officials--some several levels below him--for action on the Middle East. Chief among those is Desra Percaya, Director for International Security and Disarmament. Percaya's office handles all Security Council issues, most Middle East issues

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and nonproliferation as well. Percaya's predecessor, Hasan Kleib, is now Natalegawa's deputy at the UN, which should facilitate policy coordination between the capital and the mission. But Percaya's overstuffed portfolio means he will be stretched particularly thin during the Indonesian presidency, which could hamper DEPLU's ability to implement the President's vision.

17. (C) Iran -- The Yudhoyono administration weathered a storm of domestic criticism for its March 2007 support of UNSCR 1747 demanding a halt to Iran's nuclear reprocessing activities. The Indonesian legislature (DPR) castigated the government for abandoning Indonesia's "independent and active foreign policy"--a euphemism for non-aligned--and "taking orders from America." Local Muslim groups joined the chorus of condemnation for abandoning "a fellow Muslim country" to side with the West. Politicians jockeying for advantage in advance of the 2009 general elections also exploited the issue for political gain. The government has already intimated its strong reluctance to support another round of sanctions.

18. (C) Despite senior Indonesian officials' caution over the domestic politics of the issue, they remain committed to international nonproliferation goals, albeit with a heavy dose of disarmament. Indonesia will look for ways to attain UN nonproliferation goals in Iran without appearing to penalize or ostracize that country. To that end, Indonesia will emphasize Iran's agreement to work with the IAEA to resolve all outstanding nuclear issues. So long as Iran appears--in any manner--to be cooperating with the IAEA, Indonesia will be extremely reluctant to consider another sanctions resolution, even in the absence of an Iranian cessation of reprocessing activities. That said, if the P-5 agrees on a new Iran resolution, Indonesia would be hard pressed not to join the consensus.

19. (C) Iraq -- Domestic opposition to U.S. involvement in

Iraq has kept the Indonesian government from supporting too overtly the Iraqi government and U.S. policy there. Recently, however, Indonesia has begun to move ahead on Iraq. Most notably, the GOI has announced that it will try to reopen its embassy in Baghdad although it has not set a specific timeframe for doing so. Indonesia will almost certainly join a P-5 consensus to renew the mandate of the Multinational Forces in Iraq (MNF-I).

¶10. (C) Burma -- The Indonesians are frustrated at the lack of progress in Burma, but are wary of taking more aggressive measures. They fear that sanctions and other forms of pressure on the regime could lead to a catastrophic collapse of the Burmese government and the descent of the country into civil war as ethnic minority regions go their own way. The GOI, however, is aware that the current situation is bad news for ASEAN and it wants to find a way that moves the regime toward democratic reform. As UNSC president, Indonesia will view itself as reflecting the ASEAN position on Burma and is unlikely to go beyond what other ASEAN members have agreed to support (which is actually a pretty high threshold given what was said in the September 27 ASEAN Foreign Ministers' statement).

¶11. (C) That said, Indonesia supported the October 12 UNSC Presidential Statement on Burma and has voiced strong support for Special Envoy Gambari's mission. Gambari met with President Yudhoyono and other senior officials in Jakarta on October 21-23. Over the coming month, Indonesia is likely to remain engaged on Gambari's efforts and will look for ways to pressure the regime into cooperating with the envoy. So long as Gambari remains visible and active on Burma, even absent any tangible progress, Indonesia is unlikely to support additional UNSC pressure on the regime. In a press briefing on October 26, DEPLU official Desra Percaya said Indonesia has no plans to raise Burma in the UNSC.

¶12. (C) Timor Leste -- A UNSC mission to Timor-Leste November 25-December 1 will also visit Indonesia. The mission will be charged with reaffirming the UNSC's commitment to Timor-Leste's sovereignty, territorial integrity and

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long-term stability. The mission will also assess the progress of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). Indonesia does not appear to view the UNSC mission as a threat, despite the UNHRC's decision not to attend the hearings of the Indonesia-Timor Leste Commission on Truth and Friendship (CTF) and will use the UNSC visit to highlight its good relations with the former breakaway province.

¶13. (C) Kosovo -- The Kosovo issue exposes a key tension in Indonesian foreign policy. On many issues, such as Iran's nuclear program, Indonesia's position reflects a perceived solidarity with fellow Muslim countries. Yet this dynamic does not automatically push the Indonesians to support the Muslim Kosovars. Re Kosovo, Indonesia's own ethnic divisions and fears of separatism cause it to give issues of territorial sovereignty equal weight. Accordingly, Indonesia has made its support of any solution conditional upon Serbia's acceptance. The result, in terms of UNSC debate, has been an ambivalence which, so far, the government has not chosen to resolve. The fact that Kosovo thus far has not attracted a great deal of domestic attention from Muslim constituencies may allow Indonesia to go along with any P-5 consensus that gives sufficient cover on the principle of territorial sovereignty. As with Iran, a P-5 consensus on a Kosovo resolution will be a necessary prerequisite for the GOI to take a stand.

PROCESS OVER PROGRESS

¶14. (C) Over all, the GOI will be satisfied if it looks like a fair broker during its presidency. Culturally, Indonesians dislike conflict and want to be seen as accommodating and

friendly, even at the expense of making progress on substantive matters. The last thing that the GOI wants is for its November tenure to involve tension and recriminations, and they will work hard to make sure that does not happen. Our guess is that the Indonesians will try to go with the flow, while nudging the process a bit in areas which they find of import such as the Middle East and Burma.

HUME